

The gospel-method of justification.

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S E R M O N

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L O N D O N :

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ACTS xiii. 38, 39.

Be it known unto you, therefor, men and Brethren; that, through this man, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And, by him, all, that believe, are justified; from all things, from which you could not be justified, by the law of Moses.

***** H E N *Paul and Barnabas* set out,
* W * upon their first apostolic journey,
* * * they went, among other places, to
* * * *Antioch in Pisidia*. And, as it was
their constant custom, wherever they came,
first to preach the gospel to the *jews*, and *de-*
vout gentiles, who attended the synagogue-
service, they entered into the jewish syna-
gogue, on the sabbath-day; and sat down;
very probably, in the chairs of the *doctors*, or
teachers, to intimate their errand.

The *antient jews* used to read a portion of
the *law*, and another of the *prophets*, in their
synagogues, every sabbath-day; by which
means, they read them through, once, every
year. 'Till that reading was over, *Paul and*

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Barnabas fate, as hearers. But, after the reading of the *scriptures*, the rulers of the *synagogue* used to permit, or desire, whom they pleased, to explaine what had been read ; or to make some useful exhortation to the people. And, most probably, knowing somewhat of the character of these two *apostles* ; the rulers of the *synagogue* sent unto them, desiring that, if they had any doctrine, or pious exhortation, to deliver unto the people, they would speak, freely and openly, in the *synagogue* — Upon that, *St. Paul* stood up, and made this speech, of which our text is a part. — The design of it was, evidently, to induce the *jews*, and *devout gentiles*, that were present, in the *synagogue*, to imbrace the *christian religion*, as more excellent than the *law of Moses* : and, particularly, in that it offered the forgiveness of all manner of sins ; and such a full and complete justification, as they could not expect, from the *law of Moses*.

Our text contains, in a few words, the substance of the great gospel-doctrine of *justification*. And *St. Paul* hath, here, given us a summary of what he hath said, more largely, in his *epistles* ; particularly in the two epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. I, therefor, would desire your diligent attention, whilst I endeavor to explaine, and apply, a text, of so great importance. Which I propose to do, in the following manner.

I. By

- I. By showing you, what is meant, by *justification*.
- II. How imperfect the *justification* was, which the *jews* could expect, from the *law of Moses*.
- III. How full and sufficient a *justification* may be obtained, by the method, proposed in the *gospel*.
- IV. The method of obtaining *justification*, proposed in the *gospel*, is, by *faith*.
- V. The benefit of this *justification* extendeth unto all, that believe; whether they were formerly *jews*, or *gentiles*.
- VI. I would conclude with a brief application.

I. I am to show you what is meant by *justification*. — *Through this man* [that is, through Jesus Christ] *is preached unto you, the forgivenesse of sins; and, by him, all that believe, are justified.*

What is the favor, here promised them? It hath, often, and very properly, been observed, that the word, *justification*, is a *forensic* term; *that is*, a term, taken from the *forum*, or a court of judicature. For a person, that is either acquitted, as innocent of the crime, laid to his charge; or pardoned; is, very properly, said, to be *justified*; to stand right in the court, or to be freed from

from the sentence of condemnation. — That is to be justified among men.

To be justified, in the sight of GOD, is, to stand right in the court of heaven; that is, in the divine favor; or to be treated, as righteous, before GOD, considered as lawgiver, or judge. If any man were perfectly innocent, he would be justified by his works. That, and that alone, would be, in the scriptural sense, to be justified by works, or merit, or according to desert. And "the reward would

Rom. iv.
4. *"be reckoned to him, not of grace, but of debt."*

They, who have transgressed, must be justified by *grace*, or favor; if they be justified at all. And the justification of such persons is, otherwise, called the *pardon, forgiveness, or remission, of their sins*. So it is called, here, in our text, and in many other places, both of the old and new testament. As mankind, therefor, are all considered as offenders; by the *forgiveness of sins*, and by the being *justified from all things*, is meant one and the same thing. For, when the justification of a sinner is spoken of, the two phrases are exactly parallel. And the same thing is to be understood; whether it be said, *men are justified*, or *their sins are remitted, forgiven, pardoned, blotted out, not imputed unto them, covered, or remembered no more*.

II. Our text leads us to consider, how imperfect the *justification* was, which the
jews

jews could expect, from the *law of Moses*. —

“ Through this man, is preached, unto you,
 “ the forgivenesse of sins, and, by him, all,
 “ that believe, are justified, *from all things*;
 “ *from which you could not be justified by the*
 “ *law of Moses* (a).”

In order to understand this, the more clearly; let us trace the matter from the begining.

— In paradise, our first parents (as long as they continued innocent) were justified by perfect innocence. But, when they had transgressed, they could, no longer, look for justification, that way.

If it should be inquired, “ Under what *law*
 “ were mankind, from *Adam* to *Moses*? ” I would answer, Under the law of innocence, or the *moral law*; under which, all mankind now are, and ever have been. — If it be farther inquired, “ By what method, were the
 “ *patriarchs* to expect justification? ” I would answer, — By the grace, or favor, which was then reveled, more particularly in that first promise, *That the seed of the woman should* Gen. iii.
bruise the serpent's head. Which, in their si-¹⁵
 tuation, at that time, might teach our first parents, “ That, though sin, misery, and death,
 “ had been introduced, by the old serpent,
 “ their grand enemy; yet he should be con-
 “ quered,

(a) It has been said, or insinuated, that by the *law of Moses* is not meant the *law of Moses*. I take St. Paul's authority to be a good proof of the contrary. *John* i. 17. “ The *law*
 “ was given by *Moses*, but grace and truth were by *Jesus*
 “ *Christ*. ” Consequently the law was not before *Moses*.

“ quered, by the seed of the woman ; and
 “ righteousness, life, and happiness, finally,
 “ prevail.”—Most evidently, their justification, after men became *sinners*, was to be *by grace*, or favor ; and upon lower terms than perfect innocence ; *that is*, by *faith*, joined with sincere and habitual, though imperfect, obedience. If they, from a love to truth and righteousness, received those revelations, which GOD vouchsafed to make unto them ; and habitually acted according to such a *faith* ; then they had well grounded hopes given them, that GOD would be merciful ; *that is*, in other words, that he would pardon their sins, or justify them.

The revelation of *faith's* being accounted, unto him, for *righteousness*, was, most clearly, made known to the patriarch *Abraham*. And,
 Gen. xv. 6. “ In him, it was promised, that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed : and that his spiritual seed were to be, all such of mankind, as would imitate his faith and obedience ; whether they were his natural descendants, or no.”

Long after that covenant, made with *Abraham*, GOD entered into another, and a peculiar, covenant, with the nation of *Israel*. That was called the *Horeb*, or *Sinai*, covenant ; or the *law of Moses*. — From *Adam* to *Moses*, the law of innocence [or the moral law *] was the rule and standard of what was perfectly holy, or virtuous. Though, when the *patriarchs* found,

* “ The sum of the *moral law* is to love GOD, with all our hearts ; and our neighbor, as ourselves.”

found, that they fell short of a perfect conformity to that law, they had intimations given them, that their *faith*, when accompanied with *sincerity*, or habitual obedience, would be accounted unto them for righteousness. But, lest the memory of the original constitution of innocence should be lost, or the notions of it obscured, it was again revived, in *the law of Moses*. Onely, instead of the one positive command, "To abstain from the fruit of that particular tree, in *paradise*, known by the name of *the tree of knowlege of good and evil*;" GOD gave the *Israelites*, several laws, about rites and ceremonies, to præserve them from the spreading contagion of *idolatry*. — Thus was *the law given, because of transgressions*; that is, to show the *Israelites*, the evil¹⁹ of idolatry, and of every vice; and to convince them, that (as they were transgressors, as well as other men) they were liable to *death*, the penalty of sin, according to their law; and, therefor, must have recourse to the *patriarchal*, or *abrahamic*, covenant, for pardon and acceptance with GOD.

See Mr. Locke on Gal. iii.

As the original constitution of *innocence* was renewed, in the *Sinai-covenant*, the terms of it are expressed, in the same way; namely, "*Do this, and live*"; but disobey, in any particular, and die. Or, *cursed is every one, who continueth not, in all things, that are written, in the book of the law, to do them.*" — And, as these terms extended unto

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that

Rom. v.
20.

that law, in general; in which, were many positive institutions, St. Paul very justly observes, *The law entered, that the offence might abound*; [or, “*so that, (a) by the entering “ in, of the law, the offence did abound.”*] *That is*, There were, in the law of *Moses*, a great number of præcepts; to the transgression of any of which, *death* was annexed, as the penalty. Whereas; there had been but one præcept of that kind, before the publishing of the law; *namely*, that, given to our first parents, concerning the forbidden fruit.—By the law of *Moses*, then, the *Israelites* were condemned to death, without mercy; not onely for their offences against the *moral* præcepts, but also for transgressing the *positive* institutions.

* See Lev.
vi. 1—7.

It is true; there were *sacrifices* appointed, not onely for their offences against the *ceremonial* law; but, also, to free them, in some smaller cases, from *moral* * guilt: but that was onely in a political view. For it doeth not appear, that, by such *sacrifices*, they could obtain justification unto eternal life.—Such sacrifices could do no more than rescue them from condemnation, in any of the courts in *Israel*: that is, from dying, by the hands of the civil magistrate, or by some immediate judge-

(a) *ἵνα αἰτιασθῇ*, the causal *that*, signifies the designed event. *ἵνα ἐκασθῇ*, the eventual *that*, or *so that*, is used to denote the actual, not the designed, event. See Matt. i. 15; 23. John ix. 39. and xii. 37,—40. Compare Matt. x. 35, 36. See, also, Dr. Hammond on Matt. i. 22.

judgement of God: and so onely prolonged this temporal life, 'till death came upon them, by the course of nature, or because of some other great transgression of the *law*.—Accordingly; the author of *the epistle to the Hebrews* saith, expressly, “That their gifts and sacrifices — could not make him, that did the service, perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. For the blood of bulls, and of goats; and the ashes of the [*red*] heifer, wherewith they sprinkled the unclean, sanctified onely to the purifying of the flesh.” And again, he intimates, that “there was no perfection, by the *Levitical* priesthood.” “And that the *law* made nothing perfect.” And finally, “The *law*, haveing onely the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image, could never, with those sacrifices, which they offered, year by year, continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.” — Now; herein consisted the imperfection of that justification, which the jews might expect from the *law of Moses*. For such great moral wickedness, as idolatry, murder, adultery, and the like, there were no sacrifices appointed. —Hence it was, that the royal psalmist, after the two black crimes of murder and adultery, prayed thus, “Deliver me from blood-guiltiness. —For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering.” —In such cases, the *law* had appointed no sacrifice. And, where sacrifices

were appointed, they cleansed only to the purifying of the flesh; or assured the offender, of no more than a reprieve from dying, for that particular crime, either by the sentence of the jewish magistrate, or by some immediate judgement from GOD.

Upon this repræsentation, you may, perhaps, inquire; "Did they all perish, that lived under the *law*? Were none of them justified in the sight of GOD? None of them made perfect, as pertaining to the conscience?"—To which, I would answer; *Yes, certainly!* Many of them, that lived under the *law*, yea, all believing pœnitents, were justified, in the sight of GOD. But then, they were not justified, by virtue of *that law*. For

Rom. iii. 20. St. *Paul* assures us, that, "by the deeds of the *law*, there shall no flesh be justified, in his sight." "For, by the *law*, was the knowledge of sin; and of death's being the penalty, annexed to the transgression of it. But it contained no offers, no promises, of mercy, unto those, who, in any particular, offended against it."—And the same thing he hath expressly asserted, elsewhere.

Gal. iii. 10, 11, 12. "For, as many as are of the works of the *law*, are under a curse. For it is written,

Deut. xxvii. 26. "*Cursed is every one, that continueth not, in all things, which are written, in the book of the law, to do them.* — But that no man is justified, by the *law*, in the sight of GOD, is evident. For *the just by faith shall live.*

Habbak. ii. 4. "Where-

“Whereas; the law is not of faith; but it’s
 “terms are, *The man, that doeth these things,*
 “*shall in (or by) them (a).*” Whoever, there-^{Lev.}
 for, of the jews were justified, were not justifi-^{xviii. 5.}
 ed, by the law of Moses; but by the patri-
 archal, or abrahamic, covenant. According to
 which, faith was accounted, unto them, for
 righteousness. And that patriarchal (or abra-
 hamic) covenant was, in substance, the same
 with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Which leads me,

III. To show you, how full and sufficient
 a justification may be obtained, by the method
 proposed in the gospel.—“Through this man,
 “is preached, unto you, the forgiveness of
 “sins, and, by him, all, that believe, are jus-
 “tified, from all things; from which, the jews
 “could not be justified, by the law of Moses.”

You

(a) It is said, Lev. xviii. 5. [*Thou shalt keep my statutes, and my judgements; which if a man do, he shall live in [or, by,] them.*] The antient jews understood, thereby, liveing, and being happy, for ever. *Vivet in eis vitâ sempiternâ.* Targum Onkelos. *Vivet in eis vitâ seculi; & portio ejus cum justis erit.* Targum Jonathan. *Quoniam retributio ejus, qui operabitur illa, est, ut vivat vitam æternam.* Versio Arabic.

St. Paul, once and again, refers to that passage, in *Leviticus*: and interprets it, in the same sense, with the above-mentioned, antient jews. [See Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 10, 11, 12.] And I see no reason to think, that St. Paul argued *ad homines*.—On the contrary; the understanding it, in the sense, here given, seems necessary, in order to make out the connection, and show the force, and validity, of the apostle’s argument.—The passage may be, also, found, Nehem. ix. 29. Ezek. xx. 11; 13; 21.

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You have seen, already, how imperfect a justification was granted, by the *law of Moses*. —As none of the jews came up to the terms of innocence, or perfect obedience, the *law* condemned them all, to death, without mercy. For, in many cases, there were no *sacrifices* appointed, or accepted. And, in other cases, where they might have been forgiven, upon offering the appointed sacrifice, it rescued them from death, onely for the præsent. It did not make the person, who brought the *sacrifice*, perfect, as to his conscience; or intitle him to the blessing of *eternal life*. —But, by *Christ Jesus*, or under the gospel, *we have preached unto us, the forgivenesse of sins*; that is of all sins, great or small, in *moral* cases, or as to *positive* institutions. For, if we comply with the christian revelation, we shall be justified, from *all things*, all our transgressions, all the crimes, that can be laid to our charge; though, from many such crimes, there was no justification, for the jews, by the *law of Moses*.

It is true, when the jews found that, by the *deeds of the law*, *no flesh could be justified in the sight of GOD*; and that the *law* condemned all transgressors, to death, without mercy; they were naturally led to look back to the *abrahamic* covenant, which contained a method of justification, upon much easier terms; or (which comes to the same thing) the rigor of the *law* was designed to make them turn their eyes unto the *faith*, which was afterwards to be

be reveled. And, therefor, *the law* is repræ- Gal. iii.
sented, as a schoolmaster, (or a severe tutor, ^{23, &c.}
to children,) to make the *jews* long to get out
of their state of minority, and to come into
the glorious liberty of the gospel: or to bring
them unto *Christ*; that they might be treated
with the manly liberty, of persons, got out
of their minority, and *that they might be justi-*
fied by faith, or by the method, præscribed in
the gospel.—And that the dispensation of the
law was not final, but had a farther reference,
St. Paul has planely intimated; where he calls Rom. x.
“*Christ the end of the law, for righteousness,*” ^{4, 5.}
“*unto every one that believeth.* For *Moses* de-
scribeth the righteousness, which is of the
“*law*, in this manner; *the man, that doeth*
“*these things, shall live by them.*”

The method of the justification of sinners
hath been, all along, the same; from the
fall of our first parents, unto this day; name-
ly, not by merit, or perfect innocence, but by
grace, or favor (b). Onely, I would have you
observe that, in the *gospel*, there are the most
clear discoveries of this method of justifi-
cation. For it is there, in the most plane and
expresse manner, asserted, that the penitent
shall have all their sins forgiven; and be jus-
tified, not from one or two crimes, but from
all

(b) The need, which the *gentiles* [as well as *jews*] had,
of justification, upon lower terms than perfect innocence, is
represented, by Mr. Locke, in his *Reasonableness of Christi-*
anity, &c. See his works, in folio, vol. 2d. p. 478. in the
fourth edition, p. 511, &c.

all their transgressions, how many and how great soever.

IV. "The method of obtaining justification, proposed in the gospel, is *by faith*."
—*By him, such, as believe, are justified.*

Observe it carefully, "They are not said, "to have been *justified from all eternity*;" but, by him, all, that *believe*, are justified. It is not *before faith*, and *without faith*, but upon their *believing*. So says St. Paul, in our text. And (I suppose), St. Paul's account of this matter may be depended upon.

What that *faith* is, which is required, in order to our justification, is clearly expressed, in many places of the new testament (c). And the sum of what is there said, is, "That, the *faith*, which justifies a christian, "must not be a bare assent to the truth of "the gospel; but such a belief, as influences "to obedience."

Rom. iii.
28.

It is true, St. Paul says, *We conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* But that was said, in opposition to the *jews*, or *jewish christians*, who were for seeking justification, by the *law of Moses*. Whereas; *faith*, or the *gospel*, is, of itself, sufficient; without our observing the *jewish law*.

(c) The Cambridge MS reads ver. 39. thus, *And by repentance, every one, that believeth in him, is justified, &c.* But that various reading has not sufficient authority.

law. But *faith* in the christian revelation will neither justify, nor save, us; unlesse we do the *works*, required, in that revelation. —Or, in other words, unlesse we lead an holy, christian life, as well as believe the christian religion to be true, we have no reason, from any thing said, in the new testament, to expect either to be justified, or saved.

And accordingly, St. James hath declared, *James ii.*
that *faith, without works, is dead, being alone.* ^{14, &c.}
That Abraham was justified, by works; when he offered up his son, Isaac, on the altar; that his faith co-operated with his works; and by his works, his faith was rendered perfect. From all which, he concludes, that a man is justified by works, and not by faith onely; and that, as the body, without the spirit, is dead; so faith, without works, is dead also.

V. “The benefit of this justification extendeth, unto all, that believe; whether they were formerly jews, or gentiles.”

By him, ALL, that believe, are justified.

Our Savior himself hath said, GOD so loved *John iii.*
the world, as to give his onely-begotten son, that, ^{16.}
whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but should have everlasting life. And St. Paul is very clear, in other places, as well as our text, in asserting the free grace, or generous, extensive nature, of the gospel-offers, and in showing, that, wherever christianity is preach-

ed, none are excluded from the benefit of it ;
 unlesse such, as exclude themselves, by their
 own wilful unbelief, or disobedience. For,
 1 Tim. ii. as he, in expresse words, declares, GOD *would*
 4. *have all men to be saved, and to come unto the*
knowlege of the truth. St. Peter, also, preach-
 ed the same doctrine ; expressly declareing,
 2 Pet. iii. that GOD *is long-suffering towards us : not*
 9. *willing that any should perish ; but that all*
should come to repentence.

The narrow and legal spirit of the jews
 was, for confining salvation, absolutely and
 unconditionally, to their own, *elect* nation ;
that is, to a small part of the human race ;
 and they represented almighty GOD, as
 haveing, absolutely, reprobated the greatest
 part of mankind, or doomed them, to in-
 evitable destruction. — Whereas ; GOD is the
 merciful father of us all ; whose *tender mer-*
cies are (even in the old testament) said, to
 be *over all his works* ; and he himself declares,
 that *he delighteth not in the death of a sinner,*
but had rather that all sinners would turn and
live. — The generous spirit of the gospel
 proclames the most free-grace, and extensive
 goodnesse. For there, *the grace of GOD,*
which bringeth salvation unto all men, is said
 to have *appeared, with it's bright beams,*
 upon a benighted world. And whoever
 perishes, perishes through his own fault,
 onely.

The sum of what has been said, comes to this; "By *justification*, is meant, either "acquitting a person, as innocent of the "crime, laid to his charge; or, upon "certain terms, pardoning him, if he hath "been guilty. Whoever is justified according to the gospel of *Christ*, he is "justified, from all the crimes, that can "be alleged against him; and shall not "only be raised from the dead, as all "mankind shall be; but he shall, also, be "made glorious and happy for ever.—*Faith*, "or a compliance with the gospel-method "of salvation, is the condition, on which "we are to hope for justification, or acceptance with GOD:—This mercy extendeth "unto all, that believe. And GOD affordeth "us all, sufficient help; so that we may all "believe, obey, and be happy; if it be not "our own faults."

Application. (1.) From what has been said, we may gather, what the apostle *Paul* accounted *legal preaching*.

The judaizing teachers gave great disturbance to the gentile churches, by insisting upon it, that men might be *justified*, by the *law of Moses*; and by preaching up the necessity of the *gentile christians* being circumcised, and observing that *law*, or else they could not be saved. Unless they added the *jewish religion*, to the *christian religion*, Act, xv.

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they prætended that they could not be justified, or saved. — As if the gospel-method, alone, and of itself, had been insufficient. Now, that was *legal preaching*. That was adding the *law* to the *gospel*, as the method of justification before GOD. Whereas; St. Paul saith, “ That, by *Jesus Christ*, all, that “ believe, are justified, from all things, from “ which they could not be justified, by the “ *law of Moses*.

(2.) From what hath been said, you may easily see what you have to expect.

You can, none of you, expect to be justified, by merit, or to plead perfect innocence, at the grand tribunal. You must, therefor, have recourse to an easier and milder method of justification. And that (as the text informs you) must be, by *faith*. But, if you take in the whole gospel-account, you will find, that it must be by such a *faith*, as is the root, or principle, of an holy life; — a *faith*, working by love; or produceing the excellent fruit of righteousness, or holiness; *that is*, in one word, by a compliance with the terms of the gospel. For, by *faith*, in the new testament, is often meant the whole *gospel*.

This is the way; in which alone, you can rationally hope to have your sins forgiven, and your transgressions covered. — How careful, therefor, should you all be, to comply with this method? Nay; how exceeding

cedeing thankful ought you to be, unto almighty GOD, that, in his abundant mercy, he hath sent his son, into our world, to make such a gracious offer; and to proclame such glad tideings of great joy, unto all nations, and all persons, that will but imbrace the gracious offer? Suppose your case were desperate and hopelesse, and that you had no prospect of forgivenesse, or of justification before GOD; how acceptable would the offer of pardon, and mercy, then be? Suppose you were to be tried by the law of innocence, you would all be condemned; and none of you could hope, in that way, to be justified before GOD. But, notwithstanding the terror, which that law denounced, unto those, that were under it, GOD hath sent forth, unto us, the sweet sound of *mercy*, and hath commiſſioned his holy apostles to declare, that *we are not under the law, but under grace*: and that *there is no condemnation, to those, that are in Christ Jesus; provided they walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit*. How ought our very hearts to rejoyce within us, at the sweet sound of *mercy*? How should we lament and acknowledge our sins? turn from them? and flie for refuge, unto this hope, that is set before us?—Have you any concern for your everlasting welfare? any desire to rise unto the resurrection of life; and to escape the sentence of condemnation; when you stand
before

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before your righteous and impartial judge, in the last day? — For GOD's sake then, and for the sake of your own souls, apply to this method of justification, and acceptance with GOD. Break off your sins by repentance, and your iniquities, by showing mercy: turn unto the Lord, while there is hope; and call upon him, while he is near. Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the Lord will yet be merciful to him. — Through *Jesús Christ*, there is proclaimed mercy, and forgiveness, for every sin, and for all kinds and degrees of sin; provided they sincerely repent, and amend. — *If any man have sinned, and repented of it, there is an advocate with the father, Jesús Christ, the righteous; who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of all pœnitent persons, throughout the whole world.* — If you, often and earnestly, pray to GOD, and watch over your hearts and lives, that your conversation may be, as becometh the gospel of *Christ*, you may be of that happy number, whose sins are forgiven, and whose iniquities are blotted out. — What a pity is it that, when GOD lays no bar, in the way to mens salvation, men should be so foolish, so wicked, so cruel unto themselves, as to neglect their own salvation, and to persist in sin, 'till it proves their ruine?

1 John ii.
1, 2.

As to those of you, who are sincere believers; — how ought you to rejoice, and persevere

persevere in the well-chosen course, in which you are already walking? You are in a pardoned, justified state: and, as you are habitually holy, and your own hearts condemn you not, you may have confidence towards GOD. A few days more, and your warfare shall be accomplished, and your victory secure. Watch and pray, that you may not be overcome, by the remaining temptations, which you may meet with, in this state of trial. Instead of following the great, or the multitude, to do evil; endeavour to make your good works shine out, before all around you: that others, beholding them, may glorify your father, who is in heaven. By a pious and virtuous, a prudent and exemplary life, adorn the doctrine of GOD, your savior, in all things. Let your families and your closets be witnesses to your stated devotion. Be sure to keep holy the lord's day. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, — as the manner of too many is. — And you ought to make conscience of attending at the *table of the lord*. — But remember, that the means are of no value, any farther, than they promote righteousness, which is final, and of eternal, unalterable obligation. — In a day of such distinguishing light and liberty, as you, at present, enjoy, there is more knowlege, and greater holiness, justly required at your hands. And, if you, who profess the

christian

The gospel-method, &c.

christian faith, do not lead lives becomeing your *christian* profession; you, in effect, deny the faith, and are worse than the very *infidels*.

To conclude. — As you desire the pardon of your sins, and to be justified, in the sight of GOD, from all your transgressions; as you value the credit of the *christian* religion, and desire the everlasting welfare of all around you. Nay; as ever you hope to meet with joy and acceptance, before the tribunal of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, in that decisive day: — If there be any arguments of sufficient weight; any motives, that can deserve your regard; By these, I would, in the most earnest and affectionate manner, presse, and exhort you, to show your faith, by your works; and carefully to live according to the rules of our most holy religion. *For* [whether we think of it, or no,
 1 Cor. v. it is one of the most important truths in
 11. the whole world; that] *we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, in the great and solemn day; when, and where, we shall, each of us, recieve, according to the deeds done in the body; whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil.*

The E N D.

